

from the University of North Texas and a law degree from the University of Denver. Ms. Sopper was an accomplished dancer and choreographer and continued to coach at gymnastics clubs.

Ms. Sopper practiced law as a Lieutenant in the Navy's JAG Corps, focusing on defense and appellate defense. She had left the Navy JAG Corps and was an associate with the law firm Schmeltzer, Aptaker & Sheperd, P.C. when she found her dream job: to coach the women's gymnastics team at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

It was a one year appointment and Ms. Sopper was looking forward to the challenge. Her mother, Marion Kminek, says Mari-Rae was excited about the opportunity. "I said go for it. Life is too short. It was something she had always wanted to do and she was so happy and excited," recalls Kminek.

At the time of her death, Ms. Sopper was moving to Santa Barbara to begin her appointment. Her close friend, Mike Jacki, recalls "This was to be a new adventure for Mari-Rae, and an opportunity to get back into the sport she loved. We have lost a very special person. She was prepared to make her dream come true, and in an instant it was gone."

Mari-Rae Sopper is remembered for her loyalty, strong values, excellent work ethic and spirit for life. She is survived by her mother, Marion Kminek and stepfather, Frank Kminek, her father Bill Sopper, sister Tammy and many loving friends.

None of us is untouched by the terror of September 11th, and many Californians were part of each tragic moment of that tragic day. Some were trapped in the World Trade Center towers. Some were at work in the Pentagon. And the fates of some were sealed as they boarded planes bound for San Francisco or Los Angeles.

I offer today this tribute to one of the 51 Californians who perished on that awful morning. I want to assure the family of Mari-Rae Sopper, and the families of all the victims, that their fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters will not be forgotten.●

IN RECOGNITION OF SISTER ROSA ALVAREZ

● Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Sister Rosa Alvarez for her commitment to social service for Delaware's immigrants. She has dedicated her life to opening doors to families that otherwise might have been closed by language and cultural barriers. In doing so, she has become a lifeline for Georgetown's Hispanic community.

In the last decade, Latino immigrants have flooded Georgetown, transforming the ethnic and cultural backdrop of southern Delaware. Sister Rosa has helped the community overcome language barriers so that they can

start healthy families and lead productive lives.

Sister Rosa has been present for hundreds of area births. Known as "la abuelita," or "little grandmother," Sister offers help to Georgetown's mothers and children, particularly those mothers who are children themselves. Placing heavy emphasis on prenatal care, she helps young mothers make doctors appointments and provides transportation if necessary, to make sure they get to them. She successfully campaigned for vitamins for the community's pregnant mothers, and actively mentors parents who need assistance.

Sister Rosa works with La Esperanza, a community center for Sussex County's Latino population doing fantastic work in its own right, to provide social services for thousands of immigrants faced with inaccessible healthcare, domestic violence, reduced education and legal complications.

Working alongside Mark Lally and Marjorie Biles in my Georgetown office, Sister Rosa helps the downstate Hispanic community navigate the maze of paperwork often required to get work visas, Medicaid benefits and housing. She helps Spanish-speaking immigrants fill out English language forms and devotes time every week to helping families translate and pay their bills.

At some point, all of us need to look back and take stock of where we have been and where we are going. Have we lived our lives in the service to others, or merely for ourselves? At the end of the day, can we say with confidence that we did our best and worked to our fullest potential?

I had the pleasure of meeting Sister Rosa at La Red, a Hispanic health center in Sussex County, DE, earlier this year. I was struck by her boundless energy and kind heart. She offers people hope. Her dedication intensifies the work of others, and pushes us to take an introspective look at the purpose of our own lives.

Mahatma Gandhi, one of Sister's idols, said in the 1920s, "If we are to reach real peace in this world, we shall have to begin with the children." Today his sentiments are seen in her actions.

At a time when the face of our Nation is in constant flux and the call to service rings louder than ever, it is individuals like Sister Rosa who leave me feeling hopeful about our country's future. It is she who brought many in the community to my office for assistance, she who is empowering community leaders, she who is making a difference with her infectious smile.

I rise today to honor and thank Sister Rosa for her selfless dedication to the betterment of others. She is a remarkable woman and a testament to the community she represents.●

IN CELEBRATION OF EAST SIDE CHARTER SCHOOL

● Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the East Side Charter School in Wilmington, DE. Five years after opening their doors to some of the State's most economically and educationally disadvantaged children, they have amassed a record of meeting and exceeding expectations. The achievement gap is narrowing in the First State, and the East Side Charter School is leading the way.

Located in the middle of what is called the projects, in properties managed by the Wilmington Housing Authority on the east side of Wilmington, East Side Charter School is home to low-income students in grades K-3 who face unique challenges.

Over 80 percent of the students at East Side Charter School live in poverty. Most of the children live with only one parent, few of whom completed any college education. Many live in neighborhoods with high incidence of violence and crime, and some are without proper nutrition and health care.

But at this school, kids can come early and stay late. They have a longer school year. They wear school uniforms. Parents sign something akin to a contract of mutual responsibility. Teachers and administrators are given freer reign to innovate and initiate. The attendance rate is nearly perfect. Parents are given a better chance to help children fulfill their potential.

At this school the halls are filled with talented faculty, skilled supervisors, and dedicated staff. Principal Will Robinson challenges students and empowers them to meet those challenges.

When the East Side Charter School started 5 years ago, the odds were stacked against its success. The school has flourished though, in spite of the daunting statistics. One of almost 200 public schools in the State of Delaware, from the wealthiest to those struggling the most, East Side Charter School was the only one in the last few years where every student tested met or exceeded our State's standards in math.

As Governor of Delaware, and now as Senator, I have shared with people across America the story of East Side's incredible success. I tell them about the teachers like Barbara Juraco, who daily demonstrate unparalleled commitment and patience, the support staff that's there when needed, the students who again and again exceed expectations, and the parents and family members who understand they have an obligation to be full partners in the education of their children. Together, they serve as an inspiration and an example to communities across the country.

Delaware is a small State, but we are building a growing record of achievement in public school education. Statewide, scores have again increased in all